

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the first paragraph as follows:

--The present applicaton is the national stage of International Application No. PCT/EP03/10778 , which was filed on September 27, 2003, and which claims priority to German Patent application No. 102 45 398.5, filed September 29, 2002, which application is incorporated herein fully by this reference.--

Please amend the first paragraph following the description header as follows:

--The invention relates to an apparatus and a method for applying semiconductor chips to a plurality of substrates, in particular smartcard modules and flexboards,~~as claimed in the preambles of claims 1 and 10.~~—

Please delete the KEY TO FIGURES and the subsequent text thereafter on page 20 of the application.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Canceled).
2. (Canceled).
3. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for applying semiconductor chips to a plurality of substrates, wherein at an adhesive application device adhesive is applied to the substrates at predefined substrate positions, at a fitting device the substrates are fitted in a defined fitting time with the semiconductor chips at the substrate positions, and in a curing device the adhesive is cured in a process time substantially exceeding the fitting time, wherein the curing device is connectable by a clamping device to a conveyor belt which transports the substrates in a transport direction along the adhesive application and fitting devices, and wherein the curing device is movable in the transport direction, at a transport speed of the conveyor belt, by a lifting device,

wherein, in the curing device which is connectable to the conveyor belt, a plurality of processing units are arranged in the transport direction of the conveyor belt, which processing units carry out simultaneous processing of the substrates fitted with the semiconductor chips as they are transported, or a plurality of control units are arranged in the transport direction of the conveyor belt, which control units carry out simultaneous control of the substrates fitted with the semiconduc-

tor chips as they are transported;

further comprising a timer device for setting a time duration,

wherein, if the plurality of processing units are arranged in the transport direction of the conveyor belt, the time duration corresponds to the sum of a processing time of a processing unit and a time period which is required to return the curing device to a starting position in a direction counter to the transport direction, and

wherein, if the plurality of control units are arranged in the transport direction of the conveyor belt, the time duration corresponds to the sum of a control time of a control unit and a time period which is required to return the curing device to a starting position in a direction counter to the transport direction.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein arranged in the curing device are the same number of processing units as the number of substrates moving in the transport direction which can be fitted by the fitting device at a predefined fitting speed within the processing time.
5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein the movable curing device comprises a thermode array arranged above the conveyor belt, said thermode array comprising a plurality of thermodes assigned to the substrate positions of the substrates, and at least one heating plate arranged below the conveyor belt.
6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the thermode array and the heating plate are movable by a slide device in a direction

perpendicular to the plane of the conveyor belt in such a way that, with the clamping device closed, they are movable toward the conveyor belt and away from the conveyor belt.

7. (Canceled).
8. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein the lifting device is connected to a conveyor belt drive for moving the conveyor belt in a step-wise manner in the transport direction.
9. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, further comprising a further clamping device, fixed to the apparatus, for keeping said conveyor belt stationary while the curing device is being returned in the direction counter to the transport direction.
10. (Currently Amended) A method for applying semiconductor chips to a plurality of substrates, wherein at an adhesive application device adhesive is applied to the substrates at predefined substrate positions, at a fitting device the substrates are fitted in a defined fitting time with the semiconductor chips at the substrate positions, and in a curing device the adhesive is cured, the method comprising:

connecting the curing device, which has a process time for curing the adhesive that substantially exceeds the fitting time, to a conveyor belt which transports the substrates in a transport direction along the adhesive application and fitting devices, by closing a first clamping device; wherein units are arranged in the curing device, and wherein the units are one of processing units and control units;

opening a second clamping device, fixed to the apparatus, so as to release the conveyor belt which is moving in the transport direction;

moving the units into a closed position in a direction perpendicular to the plane of the conveyor belt, wherein if the units are processing units, moving the curing device at a transport speed of the conveyor belt in the transport direction during a simultaneous processing of a plurality of substrates fitted with the semiconductor chips for a predefined processing time by means of the processing units and moving the processing units into an open position away from the plane of the conveyor belt following expiry of the processing time [[:]] and [[:]] wherein, if the units are control units, moving the curing device at a transport speed of the conveyor belt in the transport direction during a simultaneous control of a plurality of substrates fitted with the semiconductor chips for a predefined control time by means of the control units;

moving the control units into an open position away from the plane of the conveyor belt following expiry of the control time;

closing the second clamping device which is fixed to the apparatus;

opening the first clamping device; and

returning the curing device to a starting position in a direction counter to the transport direction.

11. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the step of moving the units into an open position can be carried out independently of a movement of the conveyor belt in the transport direction.

12. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the transport speed corresponds to a fitting speed at which the substrates on the conveyor belt are fitted, said conveyor belt moving in a step-wise manner.

13. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 11, wherein the transport speed corresponds to a fitting speed at which the substrates on the conveyor belt are fitted, said conveyor belt moving in a step-wise manner.

14. (Canceled).

15. (Canceled)

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for applying semiconductor chips to a plurality of substrates, wherein at an adhesive application device adhesive is applied to the substrates at predefined substrate positions, at a fitting device the substrates are fitted in a defined fitting time with the semiconductor chips at the substrate positions, and in a curing device the adhesive is cured, wherein the curing device, which has a process time for curing the adhesive that substantially

exceeds the fitting time, is connectable by a clamping device to a conveyor belt which transports the substrates in a transport direction along the adhesive application and fitting devices, and wherein the curing device is movable in the transport direction, at a transport speed of the conveyor belt, by a lifting device; wherein the clamping device comprises at least two clamping jaw units which are arranged at end regions of the movable curing device, each of the clamping jaw units comprising upper and lower clamping jaws which are guidable toward the conveyor belt from above and below.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein, in the curing device which is connectable to the conveyor belt, a plurality of processing units are arranged in the transport direction of the conveyor belt, which processing units carry out simultaneous processing of the substrates fitted with the semiconductor chips as they are transported.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein, arranged in the curing device are the same number of control units as the number of substrates moving in the transport direction which can be fitted by the fitting device at a predefined fitting speed within the control time.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein, in the curing device which is connectable to the conveyor belt, a plurality of control units are arranged in the transport direction of the conveyor belt, which control units carry out simultaneous control of the substrates fitted with the semiconductor chips as they are transported.